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ABSTRACT

Researchers and educators have examined the educational consequences of large and small schools. The major concerns documented in the literature on school size reflect four primary areas--curriculum, climate, achievement, and restructuring. This volume incorporates recent research on the effects of school size. Chapter 1 contains four research articles on curriculum, which show that smaller schools may be at only a minimal disadvantage when comparing academic program offerings. Chapter 2 presents findings of five studies on the relationship between school size and school climate. The studies investigated self-esteem, participation in school activities, dropout rates, and discipline concerns. Six articles in chapter 3 examine the link between school size and achievement. Findings indicate a moderate position between the following two viewpoints: (1) Large schools are better because they offer more curricular choices, materials, and facilities; and (2) small schools are better because they offer a more personalized learning environment. Chapter 4 presents findings from four studies of effective strategies to restructure large schools into small schools. An overview accompanies each chapter. Conclusions are that while smaller schools have an advantage over large schools in school climate, larger schools tend to offer a wider array of curricular offerings. To overcome these shortcomings, small schools can enlarge their offerings through technology and large schools can reorganize as schools-within-schools. Size has not yet been found to be a statistically significant factor of student achievement. (Contains 31 annotated references.) (LMI)

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